

July 15, 2010

Dear Members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

Let me be perfectly clear: The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO) are grossly unfair to public employees in fifteen states who are seeking retirement benefits from Social Security.

In my own situation, before becoming a Teacher, I held various jobs for over thirty years, which paid into my Social Security benefits account. During that time, for 12 years, I was self-employed and *personally* wrote the checks (mandated by the IRS) to the IRS for my Social Security benefits account.

Now, as I approach retirement, I find that just because I'll be collecting a teacher's pension of \$1700, my Social Security retirement benefits (about \$1700 per month) will be significantly reduced.

Is this fair? Clearly, I will not be getting wealthy on these combined pensions! Furthermore, non-public retirees may collect their pensions *and* Social Security retirement benefits in full.

There is a way to correct this unfairness. It is the Social Security Fairness Act.

I urge Congress to move the Social Security Fairness Act forward for a vote. In addition, if Congress takes up overall social security reform, I urge inclusion of repeal of the GPO and WEP as part of any reform package.

Thank you for your time and assistance,

George Reinheimer
CA